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RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 0539
RUEABND/LONDON RESIDENT OFFICE
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE 0628
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PESHAWAR 000473

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: IGFC TARIQ KHAN ANNOUNCES NEW OPERATION, EXPLAINS PLANS,
SHORTCOMINGS

REF: PESHAWAR 472

CLASSIFIED BY: Michael A. Via, Acting Principal Officer,
Peshawar, Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

Summary

1. (C) Inspector General of the Frontier Corps Tariq Khan told Acting Principal Officer Via and Deputy Director ODRP Islamabad BG Dibartolomoe, on 23 September that an operation in Derra Adam Khel had begun that day. The meeting focused on the shortcomings and planned changes for the Frontier Corps. These were highlighted by a need to establish four sector headquarters, shortages of personnel, weapons and communication equipment. Changes called for by Khan included, doubling the salary of Frontier Corps Soldiers and changing the Uniform used in the Area of Operations. Current operations in Bajaur, Swat and Derra Adam Khel mean that a long awaited Mitchni offensive near Peshawar by FC will have to wait. End summary.

Operation to Open Kohat Tunnel Begins

2. (C) Khan said that an operation had begun in Derra Adam Khel that had as one of it's objectives to clear the Kohat or Friendship Tunnel, prior to EID. He added that other planned operations, not yet started, including one planned for Mitchni, on the outskirts of Peshawar, would have to wait as the current deployments in Bajaur, Swat and Derra Adam Khel had all available assets committed.

Sector Headquarters for Frontier Corps

2. (C) Khan explained that he planned to establish four sector headquarters and provide their respective commanders with greater autonomy which would greatly increase effectiveness of the units by allowing greater initiative by local commanders. He pointed to the success he enjoyed as the 14th Division Commander in fighting miscreants in Punjab province as evidence that this concept and his other plans would be effective. Khan stated that sector headquarters would be located in Tank, Bannu

and two other locations. His vision is that each sector headquarters should have a school for the children of Frontier Corps personnel, a dispensary, and housing for the families of those deployed. He explained that housing would prevent threats to a soldier's family while deployed. He requested that the medical facility planned for Manzai be relocated to either Jandola or Tank as Manzai did not have the infrastructure to support the facility.

Need for Sniper Rifles, Radios and Protective Vests

13. (C) Khan provided a detailed list of needs to Dibartolomoe which included requirements for sniper rifles, communications equipment, and protective vests. He substantiated the needs by pointing out that the local taliban had better weapons and communications equipment than the FC. He mentioned that only half of FC's VHF radios were encrypted. He stated that his forces were relying far too heavily on cell phones for communication and that many of their radios were in poor condition and had not been tested in a communications exercise for over a year. Something he directed his staff to change immediately during our meeting. He also mentioned the need for additional protective vests.

Shortage of Units, Officers and Recruits

14. (C) Khan complained that 14 of the 59 wings of the FC are currently seconded to the army and that 8000 slots for recruits was being held up by the Ministry of the Interior because of a "ban on recruitment" which he claimed did not legally apply to the FC. Khan stated that "it is a political issue, not money." (Note: A wing is 600 personnel. End note) Khan continued by asserting that FC personnel problems go even further. He currently has a 71 percent deficiency in officers, or only one

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commission officer per unit. This situation requires largely under trained non commissioned officers to fill positions normally given to experienced officers. He said that selection of officers for his units should be made from a group of army applicants after individual interviews, bringing in only the best.

Rotation not Relief

15. (C) According to Khan, the FC has historically been a force designed to stay in the area of operation without relief. Therefore calls for relief of FC units by other security forces were misguided. He stated that a better plan would be to have sufficient forces within FC to rotate a wing at a time into combat from it's respective sector headquarters. He emphasized that he planned to adopt this approach. (Note: This may have been in response to those who call for army units to be withdrawn from other areas to provide relief to FC. End note.)

Change to the Pay Structure

16. (C) Khan stated he intended to increase the pay of FC personnel from the current rupee equivalent of 50 to 100 USD. He offered that the need for the change was due to the salary being offered by the local taliban which currently pay a recruit the local equivalent of 100 USD or more.

New uniforms

17. (C) Khan said that he intended to authorize a new uniform for the FC. The changed battle dress would be similar to the Punjab Ranger Uniform. He explained this would be more appropriate for the kind of combat missions and locations of service by the FC. He offered that the current uniform would be saved for use on ceremonial occasions.

Comment

18. (C) While calls for additional assistance are not new from FC, the relatively new IGFC exuded a confidence and grasp of his units needs, shortcomings and a plan to address them that appeared to instill confidence in his staff. Whether he is able to obtain the kind of resources and support for the changes he envisions is another question.

VIA